

sodium hydrogen carbonate, potassium hydrogen carbonate, and combinations thereof and then washing off or neutralizing the aqueous alkali solution attached to the treated whole fish.

2. (Amended) A method of preparing whole fish protected from browning or darkening, which comprises treating the whole fish with an aqueous alkali solution of a compound selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, calcium hydroxide, calcium oxide, magnesium carbonate, ammonium carbonate, sodium carbonate, sodium hydrogen carbonate, potassium hydrogen carbonate, and combinations thereof and then washing off or neutralizing the aqueous alkali solution attached to the treated whole fish.

3. (Amended) A method of preparing a food containing raw fry which comprises treating the raw fry with an aqueous alkali solution of a compound selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, calcium hydroxide, calcium oxide, magnesium carbonate, ammonium carbonate, sodium carbonate, sodium hydrogen carbonate, potassium hydrogen carbonate, and combinations thereof, then washing off or neutralizing the aqueous alkali solution attached to the treated fry, and treating the fry with a seasoning.

4. (Amended) A food containing raw fry which is prepared by treating the raw fry with an aqueous alkali solution of a compound selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, calcium hydroxide, calcium oxide, magnesium carbonate, ammonium carbonate, sodium carbonate, sodium hydrogen carbonate, potassium hydrogen carbonate, and combinations thereof to prevent darkening or browning of the raw fry, then washing off or neutralizing the aqueous alkali solution attached to the treated raw fry and treating the fry with a seasoning.

5. (Amended) A method of preparing fry free from browning or darkening from browned or darkened raw fry, which comprises treating the browned or darkened fry with an aqueous alkali solution of a compound selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, calcium hydroxide, calcium oxide, magnesium carbonate, ammonium carbonate, sodium carbonate, sodium hydrogen carbonate, potassium hydrogen carbonate, and combinations thereof and then washing off or neutralizing the aqueous alkali solution attached to the fry.

A1 6. (Amended) Fry free from browning or darkening, which are obtained by treating browned or darkened raw fry with an aqueous alkali solution of a compound selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, calcium hydroxide, calcium oxide, magnesium carbonate, ammonium carbonate, sodium carbonate, sodium hydrogen carbonate, potassium hydrogen carbonate, and combinations thereof and then washing off or neutralizing the aqueous alkali solution attached to the treated raw fry.--

Please add the following claims.

Sub C1 > --7. (New) A method of treating a fry, wherein the fry is immersed in a solution of from 0.1 to 6.0% salt water at a temperature no greater than 10°C for a time of from 30 minutes to 24 hours before treating the fry according to the method of Claim 1.

A2 8. (New) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the aqueous alkaline solution has a pH of no less than 7.0.

9. (New) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the fry are treated with the aqueous alkali solution from 1 minute to 24 hours at a temperature of from 0 to 10°C.

10. (New) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the aqueous alkaline solution further comprises any one additive selected from the group consisting of saccharides, salts, and combinations thereof.

Sub 11. (New) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the time for the washing off of the aqueous alkali solution attached to the treated fry is from 1 minute to 24 hours.

12. (New) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the neutralizing of the aqueous alkali solution attached to the treated fry comprises spraying the alkali-treated fry with an acidic solution at a pH of from 4.0 to 6.6.

13. (New) The method according to Claim 12, wherein the acidic solution comprises any one selected from the group consisting of inorganic acid, organic acid, and combinations thereof.

A2 Sub 14. (New) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the neutralizing of the aqueous alkali solution attached to the treated fry comprises immersing the alkali-treated fry in an acidic solution at a pH of from 4.0 to 6.8.

15. (New) The method according to Claim 14, wherein the acidic solution comprises any one selected from the group consisting of inorganic acid, organic acid, and combinations thereof.

Sub 16. (New) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the neutralizing of the aqueous alkali solution attached to the treated fry is performed during the course of boiling the fry in a solution of from 1 to 10% salt water by mass.

17. (New) The method according to Claim 1, further comprising any one of the steps selected from the group consisting of treating the fry with salt water, boiling the fry, draining

*cont.*  
the fry, cooling the fry, directly packing the fry in bags, and combinations thereof after the aqueous alkali solution attached to the treated fry is washed or neutralized.

18. (New) The method according to Claim 1, further comprising  
treating the fry with a solution comprising from 1 to 5% salt water for a time from 10 minutes to 5 hours at a temperature not greater than 10°C;  
washing the fry with water;  
draining the fry; and  
drying the fry  
after the aqueous alkali solution attached to the treated fry is washed or neutralized.

19. (New) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the fry is boiled at a temperature from 90 to 100°C for a time of from 1 to 10 minutes.

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20. (New) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the aqueous alkali solution does not contain hydrogen peroxide.

21. (New) The method according to Claim 2, wherein the aqueous alkali solution does not contain hydrogen peroxide.

22. (New) The method according to Claim 3, wherein the aqueous alkali solution does not contain hydrogen peroxide.

23. (New) The method according to Claim 4, wherein the aqueous alkali solution does not contain hydrogen peroxide.

24. (New) The method according to Claim 5, wherein the aqueous alkali solution does not contain hydrogen peroxide.

25. (New) The method according to Claim 6, wherein the aqueous alkali solution does not contain hydrogen peroxide.

A2 26. (New) The fry according to Claim 6, comprising a reduced loss of shape or body dripping during storage of the fry.

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#### SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENTS

Claims 1-6 have been amended for clarity and to specify alkali agents. This amendment is supported at pages 8 and 9 of the specification. Further, support for the amendments to Claims 1-6 can be found in the specification at pages 1 to 24 and the original claims. Claims 7-26 have been added. Support for these additional claims can be found in the specification at pages 7 to 14. No new matter is believed to be introduced by the amendments and the addition of these additional claims.